

Kent Fraud Alert System



TO STOP FRAUD™

Courier Fraud Alert – Police impersonation scams

Over the last few days we have received a number of reports of Police impersonation scams across the county but in particular, Maidstone, Romney Marsh, Ashford, Dymchurch, Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Dartford.

They primarily stated that they were Metropolitan Police Officers and used several names when speaking to intended victims but quite often stated that they were either DC Martin Williams or DC Matthews.

Residents were being told:

- Their bank account has been compromised.
- Their card needs replacing.
- A family member has been arrested.
- They must buy gold.
- A courier will collect their card, cash, or gold. These are scams. The police will never ask for your financial details over the phone or send someone to collect your card, cash, or valuables.

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Preventing fraud

Together,
let's stop
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Remember, ABC:



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always Confirm

Have you been asked to withdraw cash by the police?

This is a scam.

The police or your bank will **never**:

- ask for your bank details or PIN
- ask you to transfer or withdraw and handover sums of money
- send a courier to collect your bank cards, cash or PIN



If you are unsure about a call or visitor you have received:

- Don't give out any personal or financial information.
- Hang up or close your front door to check the caller's identity.
- If they phoned you, wait 10 minutes before you use the phone again (or use a different telephone) in case they stay on the line.
- Contact their company yourself or dial 101 for the police – do not call a number they have provided.
- Report suspicious activity straight away.



Kent
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Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report
Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact
In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call 999
If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use our textphone service 18000.
Or text us on 999 if you've pre-registered with the emergency SMS service.
www.kent.police.uk   

Please share this information with family and friends.

If you have been a victim of any type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and reporting to Report Fraud at [Reporting cyber crime and fraud or phishing attempts - Report Fraud](#) or call 0300 123 2040.

Find out more by visiting our website at [Advice about fraud | Kent Police](#) and also from the Home Office at [Stop! Think Fraud - How to stay safe from scams](#)



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The Nationwide scam letters

Customers of Nationwide are being warned to stay alert after reports of convincing scam letters landing on doorsteps. The Building Society confirmed it is aware of fake correspondence circulating after a customer contacted the bank on social media to question a letter they had received. The letter appeared to come from Nationwide and promoted so-called exclusive fixed-rate savings deals, claiming they were offered in partnership with another financial institution.

The letters included realistic reference numbers and even quoted the Financial Conduct Authority, making them feel credible. For people who rely on post rather than email, especially those who are digitally excluded, a physical letter can feel more trustworthy. The fact letters cost money to send also leads many people to assume they must be genuine.

Nationwide has confirmed it is aware of the scam and is urging customers to treat any unexpected letters with caution. Its advice:

- Always verify messages by calling the number on your bank card, visiting a branch, or logging in via the official website.
- Never use the contact details or links provided in a suspicious letter.

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Rental Fraud

Rental fraud happens when fraudsters trick would-be tenants into paying an upfront fee for a property that does not exist or is not available to rent. Once the criminals have received payment, they cease contact with the victim.

How to protect yourself from rental fraud -

- **Always view the property** - You or someone you trust, should view the property in-person before you sign any contracts or make payment.
- **Overseas students and workers** - If you need to secure accommodation in the UK from overseas, seek advice from the employer or university you are coming to. If you are unsure about anything a prospective landlord is asking you to do, speak to a trusted friend or family member, or seek professional independent advice.
- **Signs of fraud** - Use the information provided in the property listing, such as the address and photos, to look online for what other information you can find about the property you would like to rent. Fraudsters often steal information from legitimate listings to create fake listings of their own.
- **Payment method** - Where possible, avoid bank transfer payments; use credit or debit cards for better protection against fraud.

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This was a recent story on BBC news about victims of this type of fraud - [Friends left 'in tears' over £8k rental scam on London flat - BBC News](#)



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Urgent Scam Alert Romance and Relationship Fraud

With Valentines Day coming up criminals will be busy targeting people with these types of scams.

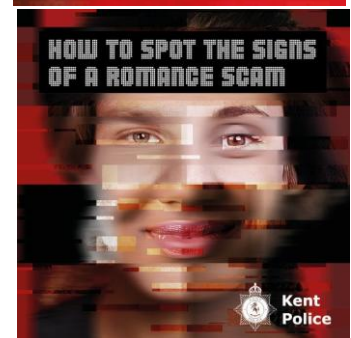
Criminals are currently using sophisticated tactics, including AI generated “deepfake” video calls and fake investment opportunities, to target individuals looking for connection online.

Four signs you are being targeted

- **The Love Bomb** – They shower you with intense affection, declare love within days and use phrases like, “I’ve never felt this way before” and “You’re the only one that understand me.” They will also ask you to keep the relationship quiet and not to tell family or friends, as they “will not understand.”
- **The Platform Shift** – They immediately pressure you to move the conversation from a dating site to encrypted apps like WhatsApp, Telegram or Signal to avoid security monitoring.
- **The Perpetual Crisis** – They claim to be working overseas (e.g. military, oil rigs, medical or a CEO) and repeatedly cancel plans to meet due to a sudden emergency.
- **The financial Hook** – Once trust is built, they ask for money for medical bills, travel costs or a guaranteed crypto investment etc.

How to protect yourself

- **Reverse Image Search** – use google images or TinEye to check if their profile photo is stolen from someone else.
- **Verify With Task** – Ask them to perform a specific action during a video call (e.g. touch your nose with your ring finger) to bypass AI deepfakes.
- **Never Send Money** – A genuine person will Never ask you for money, gift cards, crypto if you have not met in person.
- **Stay On The App** – Keep all conversations on the dating platform where you met.
- **Speak To a Trusted Person** – Tell someone you trust, ask them for their opinion on the profile.



“If this applies to you, then stop all contact immediately and block them on all platforms”

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Investment Fraud Alert

We are seeing an increase in reports of fake investment opportunities targeting individuals through social media, messaging apps, cold calls, and online adverts.

Criminals are using professional-looking websites, fabricated endorsements, and promises of high returns to gain trust and steal money.

Key warning signs:

- **Guaranteed or unusually high returns** with little or no risk
- **Pressure to act quickly** or move money urgently
- Being asked to **download remote-access software** to “help with the investment”
- Requests to **pay fees upfront** before receiving returns
- Being contacted by someone claiming to be from a **legitimate investment firm**, but only via mobile or messaging apps
- **Unregulated platforms** offering crypto or forex schemes promising fast profits
- **Celebrity endorsements** – People like Martyn Lewis are constantly used by criminals utilising AI to make it look as if they are endorsing a particular investment or product when they are scams.

How to protect yourself:

- Always check the firm and advisor on the **FCA Register** before investing.
- Verify contact details independently using the official website.
- Never allow remote access to your device for investment advice.
- Be cautious of “*too good to be true*” claims—genuine investments carry risk.
- Speak to a trusted financial advisor before making decisions.

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